In the Claims

1. (Currently amended) A method of improving an expression level ~~levels~~ of at least one of two or more proteins in a transgenic ~~plant comprising~~ plant, the method comprising:

inserting into ~~the~~ a genome of ~~said~~ a plant a DNA sequence comprising a promoter region operably linked to two or more protein encoding regions and a 3'-terminator ~~region~~ region;

wherein said protein encoding regions are separated from each other by a DNA sequence coding for a linker propeptide ~~propeptide, wherein said linker propeptide is isolatable from a plant antimicrobial protein derived from the genus Impatiens,~~ comprising a propeptide of an Ib-AMP precursor or a fragment of said propeptide; and

wherein said linker propeptide provides a cleavage site whereby ~~the~~ an expressed polyprotein is post-translationally processed into ~~the~~ its component protein ~~molecules~~ molecules and at least one of said component protein molecules is expressed in said plant at a higher level than in a plant transformed with a DNA sequence encoding that component protein molecule alone, with ~~the~~ a proviso that when said linker peptide comprises a propeptide of an Ib-AMP precursor ~~at least two of~~ each of said protein encoding regions ~~encode~~ encodes a different protein ~~proteins~~.

2. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 1 wherein said promoter region is operably linked to a signal sequence, said signal sequence being operably linked to the ~~said~~ two or more protein encoding regions and a 3'-terminator region.

3. (Currently amended) A method for ~~the expression of~~ expressing multiple proteins in a transgenic ~~plant comprising~~ plant, the method comprising:

inserting into ~~the~~ a genome of ~~said~~ a plant a DNA sequence comprising a promoter region operably linked to a signal ~~sequence~~ sequence, said signal sequence

being operably linked to two or more protein encoding regions and a 3'-terminator ~~region~~ region;

wherein said protein encoding regions are separated from each other by a DNA sequence coding for a linker propeptide ~~propeptide wherein said linker propeptide is isolatable from a plant antimicrobial protein derived from the genus Impatiens,~~ comprising a propeptide of an Ib-AMP precursor or a fragment ~~thereof,~~ of said propeptide; and

wherein said linker propeptide provides a cleavage site whereby ~~the~~ an expressed polyprotein is post-translationally processed into ~~the~~ its component protein ~~molecules,~~ molecules in a secretory pathway of said plant ~~with the proviso that at least two of said protein encoding regions encode different proteins~~.

Claims 4-10 (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim [[10]] 1, wherein ~~the propeptide~~ said linker propeptide comprises an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3 or a fragment thereof ~~SEQ ID NO. 3, 29, 21, 22, 23 or 24~~.

Claim 12 (Canceled)

Claim 13 (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 12 wherein the propeptide comprises SEQ ID NO. 4, 6, 7, 25, 26 or 27.

Claims 14-17 (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one end of the linker propeptide ~~has~~ comprises a protease [~~processing~~] recognition site ~~engineered at either or both ends thereof~~.

19. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 18 wherein said protease recognition site is terminated by two basic amino acid residues ~~the protease processing site is a subtilisin-like protease processing site~~.

20. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 2 wherein the signal sequence ~~is derived from~~ comprises a signal sequence from a plant defensin gene.

21. (Currently amended) [[A]] The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one ~~or more~~ of said two or more protein encoding regions encodes ~~multiple proteins is~~ a defense protein.

Claims 22-35 (Canceled)

36. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said linker propeptide comprises an internal propeptide of an Ib-AMP precursor or a fragment of said internal propeptide.

37. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said linker propeptide comprises a terminal propeptide of an Ib-AMP precursor or a fragment of said terminal propeptide.

38. (New) The method of claim 3, further comprising a proviso that when said linker propeptide comprises a propeptide of an Ib-AMP precursor each of said protein encoding regions encodes a different protein.

39. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein said linker propeptide comprises an internal propeptide of an Ib-AMP precursor or a fragment of said internal propeptide.

40. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein said linker propeptide comprises a terminal propeptide of an Ib-AMP precursor or a fragment of said terminal propeptide.

41. (New) The method according to claim 3, wherein said linker propeptide comprises an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3 or a fragment thereof.

42. (New) The method according to claim 3, wherein at least one of said two or more protein encoding regions encodes a defense protein.

43. (New) The method according to claim 3, wherein at least one end of said linker propeptide comprises a protease recognition site.

44. (New) The method according to claim 43, wherein said protease recognition site is terminated by two basic amino acid residues.

45. (New) A method for improving an expression level of at least one of two or more proteins in a transgenic plant, the method comprising:

inserting into a genome of a plant a DNA sequence comprising a promoter region operably linked to two or more protein encoding regions and a 3'-terminator region;

wherein said protein encoding regions are separated from each other by a DNA sequence coding for a linker propeptide comprising SEQ ID NO: 3 or a fragment thereof; and

wherein said linker propeptide provides a cleavage site whereby an expressed polyprotein is post-translationally processed into its component protein molecules and at least one of said component protein molecules is expressed in said plant at a higher level than in a plant transfromed with a DNA sequence encoding that component protein molecule alone, with a proviso that when said linker peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 3 each of said protein encoding regions encodes a different protein.

46. (New) The method of claim 45, wherein each of said protein encoding regions encodes an antimicrobial or antifungal protein.

47. (New) The method of claim 46, wherein said antimicrobial or antifungal protein is one of Dm-AMP1 and Rs-AFP2.

48. (New) A method for expressing multiple proteins in a transgenic plant, the method comprising:

inserting into a genome of a plant a DNA sequence comprising a promoter region operably linked to a signal sequence, said signal sequence being operably linked to two or more protein encoding regions and a 3'-terminator region;

wherein said protein encoding regions are separated from each other by a DNA sequence coding for a linker propeptide that comprises SEQ ID NO: 3 or a fragment thereof; and

wherein said linker propeptide provides a cleavage site whereby an expressed polyprotein is post-translationally processed into its component protein molecules in a secretory pathway of said plant.

49. (New) The method of claim 48, further comprising a proviso that when said linker propeptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 3 at least two of said protein encoding regions encode different proteins.

50. (New) The method of claim 49, wherein each of said protein encoding regions encodes an antimicrobial or antifungal protein.

51. (New) The method of claim 50, wherein said antimicrobial or antifungal protein is one of Dm-AMP1 and Rs-AFP2.